GOOD COUNTRY ROADS,

And How Can They Be Improved For the Public Welfare?

TIMELY ADDRESS DELIVERED

Before the Farmers' Institute-Sucgestions Regarding Needed Reforms-State and National Co-operation Suggested - How Excellent Roads Can be Secured Without Burdensome Taxation-The Benefit to Farmers-Narrow Tires Should be Required by Law-Abolish the Toll Gates,

The following interesting and timely address was delivered by Mr. J. B. Garvin, at the Ohio County Farmers' Institute, January 20:

The question of improved roads has within the last two years become popular, and seems to have awakened a general interest, and I hope will rapidly assume tangible shape. If "necessity is the mother of invention," I think that our great need in the matter of reads will conspire to bring a speedy and offective remedy. For the time has now fully come when something must be done to deliver us from the mud roads done to deliver as from the finite roads are a shaine to our ingenuity and a disgrace to our country. "Dirt," says a learned Englishman, "is matter in the wrong place." And perhaps most of us can easily imagine from our knowledge of American dirt roads that the Englishman must have evolved his definition while viewing an American dirt road. while viewing an American dirt road.

That the ancient land marks were established by the colonists, and continued from one generation to another is no excuse for their existence to-day. They could not have had a true concep-They could not have had a true concep-tion of the future development of our present America, besides they had more important business to attend to in those days. Good roads were not quite so important to them, as personal liberty, and they could not have handed down to succeeding generations a nobler heriting than freedom with nud roads down to succeeding generations a nobler heritage than freedom with mud rouds thrown in. The trouble is the improve-ment of our highways have not kept pace with the times. The majority of our country roads are in very little bet-ter condition to-day than they were a century ago. Is it any wonder then that the people are rising in wrath to blot these antiquated highways out of existence?

existence?

The time has never been more favorable than it is now to wage war on had roads, and secure prompt and adequate legislation. I do not believe in beseething our government to legislate for every imaginable wrong, but the public highways are far more important to the people, and consequently the government, than the water ways, in behalf of which there are annual appropriations of milions of dollars. There is no use to nibble round the question by saying that roads belong to a class of internal improvements in which the government has very little concern. The wise and brilliant statesman, Henry Clay, insisted on the dectrine of internal improvements on the part of the nation, and road making in particular. Gen. Boy Stone says "our law makers will have presently to face the greatest problem of their lives; if they turn their backs on it, the places that know them now may know them no more forever." The time has never been more favora-A MATTER OF PRIME CONCERN

It is no longer a disputed fact that the roads are among the prime concerns the roads are among the prime concerns of government, and why should our law makers evade the question? It is con-ceded by good authority that the co-operation of the government, with the states and counties is feasible and prac-ticable. And why not? How about the world renowned roads of Europe that we hear so much about? They were constructed by the machinery of the respective governments, or they that we hear so much about? They were constructed by the machinery of the respective governments, or they would never have been in existence at all. True their forms of government differ from ours in such a manner, that for us to obtain the same results, would require a little manipulating, but that might be easily overcome. What difficulty would there be in the way of enecting a national road law, whereby states or counties could secure loans from the national government at a very low rate of interest? The government could obtain sufficient money at 3 per cent, and on bonds to be issued by the state, receive 31 per cent which would meet the necessary expenses; said loans to run 20, 30 or oven 50 years. Yearly pavments of principal and interest would not exceed \$21 on every \$500. Permanent highways could thus be made that would endure for all time, and a harmonious system be established, and at the same time the burden on the farmer would gradually grow less. In this case the pernicious and costly system of working out road tax would be abolished. There is no benefit derived from such service, and it is therefore practically throwing away labor and money. There has never been a single mile of strictly first class road built by such a method. It is a thankless task that is always disposed of in the most shiftless manner. This year's labor has to be done over again next year, and so little benefit being derived, there is no encouragement for painstaking labor.

NUSSTICE TO THE PARMER.

What better right has the farmer to leave his work in the field, at a season

INJUSTICE TO THE FARMER.

What better right has the farmer to leave his work in the field, at a season of the year that is the busiest, and labor upon the public highway, than the busiess men to leave his office and shovel mud in the street gutter? It is demoralizing to all enterprise, degrading to the state, and treating the citizen as a criminal whose personal labor is demanded in the public service. Adopt a system that will be a credit to the citizen, the state and the nation. Let the farmer devote all his time and energy in the push of his business. Let us adopt a wise, judicious and economical system of internal improvements assisted by the government, and the farmer can well afford to pay his share of the burden, in the same way that he does his school tax. If the plan referred to is once adopted, viz. the cooperation of state and nation, the most difficult part of the problem, which is the financial, will be settled.

It would be impossible to raise a sufficient amount of money by taxation to build substantial roads in the county or state, and more, it would be unjust for one generation to bear all the expense, as they will be likely to receive the most benefit. We have not had an opportunity of obtaining the figures to show what the present system of roads is costing our state, but we know the sum is enormous, and we know the sum is enormous.

alone in our state amounts to \$200,000, considering the voting population and exempting those who are too old to work. This amount added to the annual levy would make a very large sum that is actually baid out at random every year, and we have very little to show for it. It is said that the supervisors, the country over, expend one way or another \$75,000,000 yearly. The United States postofice despriment expends an equal sum in ways more diverse and dishrult of control, in one case we have a well organized national bureau and an economical expenditure of the money, in the other no organization nor method, and the expenditure is almost an utter waste. This demonstrates clearly that for economy and proper financiering we need national control.

I have thus far touched upon the

I have thus far touched upon the ways and means, that are likely to be used in disposing of the difficult prob-lem of how it may be possible for us to have good roads. But until the present darkness is dispelled, and the dawn of that bright and better day for which we that bright and better day for which we now hope, how shall we use the means now within our reach to the best advantage? We cannot hope for any great change, yet there are many ways open for improvement. I presume Ohio county has many more unless of macadamized roads than any county in the state, but they are not quite up to our ideal under present circumstances. Location, grades and many minor details could be vastly improved.

A CASE IN 19185.

For instance, we take one of our best macadamized roads in the county which is well drained, comparatively even and solid road hed, but we come to a steep grade that is almost a botch to the whole enterprise. A few years ago previous to macadamizing one of our county roads contracts were let for grading and putting it in shape to receive the stone. One hill in particular ever which the road runs needed a complete overhauting. The grades and fills required considerable work to even bring it down to a five-degree grade. The specifications were complete enough, but the contractors failed to comply with the instructions. The grade was very little improved upon the contractors were paid the full amount and sent on their way rejoicing. The county without further investigation proceeded to macadamize which is well drained, comparatively

the contractors were paid the full amount and sent on their way rejoicing. The county without further investigation proceeded to macadamize the unfinished road bed, and so it remains. In this case the county was more to blame than the contractors.

Another little thing that would add to the good of the road and the confort of the traveler, would be in giving particular attention to the broken stone that are scattered broadcast over our roads every year. They are broken very large, small and indiaerent, according to the character of the breaker. It noticed a stone breaker last tall who broke the buff of his stone so large that they would not go through a ring 4 inches in diameter, yet these stone were permitted to be spread on a road already macadamized, where they will never pack in the "united kingdom," and all the penalty imposed for such raceally work was a small dock of about 5 or 6 yards in a hundred. Instead of making him break them over or no pay, the job was taken off his hands, thus outting a premium on rascality, and the farmers who are conceptled to use these rough roads have the penalty to pay. Broken stone for grades and repairing roads already stoned ought to be broken fine, and indeed no stone should be as cears for repairing macadamized surface oven where level, as is required for the first application. But thus far I have failed to see any difference in the size of the stone usually broken, and the consequence is that some of our roads are as rough and jolty in summer as mud is unbearable in whiter. I think some improvement in this respect is worth considering.

Let us petition our County Commissioners to give particular instructions to road supervisors as a part of their duty in keeping our reaced mixed reaching to road supervisors as a part of their duty in keeping our reaced mixed reaching to read supervisors as a part of their duty in keeping our reaced mixed reaching to read supervisors as a part of their duty in keeping our page dainy at read and a page of the first and a page of the page

Let us petition our County Commis-sioners to give particular instructions to road supervisors as a part of their duty in keeping our macadamized roads in repair, to scrape all loose stone in small heaps along the road side, after the road has become settled, and utilize them for filling up rats. Bust what a significant meaning that word has. Let us get out of the ruts if possible.

it is an old custom. But we must progress and we cannot do so by standing still. The rumedy must he as radical as the disease is deep seated. If we want number one roads we must adopt wide tires. As for utility, it is said "that a wagon is capable of its best work only when thoroughly tired, which can hardly be said of the horse, and it has also been noticed that the horse gets more tired as the wagon isn't."

It affords me satisfaction to know that wide tires are growing into popular favor, and are being used in some sections of the country. The Michigan lawmakers, foreseeing the advantages to be derived by the use of a broad tire, inade their law so that any farmer using a wide tire on his wagon would be remunerated by receiving a rebate of one-half of his road tax. But there are other advantages to the Michigan farmer. They claim that in, the cornield thirty bushels of corn made a heavy load with narrow tires, and that now fifty bushels of corn can be hauled with greater case with the wide tres. Another advantage would be that in drawing a load to market the size of the load can be increased one-half without doing other advantage would be that in drawing a load to market the size of the lead can be increased one-half without doing the road injury. The state could well afford to give a rebate of one-half the road tax on broad tires, for it has been discovered that in localities where broad tires are pretty generally used, the decreased tax keeps the roads in better repair than the whole tax did when the narrow tires prevail.

NEEDED LEGISLATION.

What we want is the greatest improvement for the least possible outlay, and does his school tax. If the plan referred to is once adopted, viz. the cooperation of state and nation, the most difficult part of the problem, which is the financial, will be settled.

It would be impossible to raise a sufficient amount of money by taxation to build substantial roads in the county or state, and more, it would be unjust for one generation to bear all the expense. Long time loans made through the government would equalize the burden, and the coming generation ought to bear a due proportion of the expense, as they will be likely to receive the most benefit. We have not had an opportunity of obtaining the figures to show what the present system of roads is costing our state, but we know the sum is enormous, and the cutting process under heavy loads, and ruis more than any thing else ruin our meaclamized roads. On the other hand the broad tire serves as a roller and will leave the read surface smooth and even. I believe before we begin road legislation we ought to abolish the narrow tire. To make good roads first is beginning at the wrong end. I believe that legislation, thin would enforce the general adoption of wide tires would enforce the general adoptio I believe so long as narrow tires are

wheel. To make the change in a wag already in use will cost perhaps \$15, we could have our laws so amended to allow the relate of one-half of our road tax the saving in making the change would be equal to 25 per cent on the cost. Now then with improved and easy grades, and some of the proper size rightly applied, and wide tires to smooth them down, we would be doing as well as could be expected without government aid; with one other exception, and that is having tell collectors on roads. I believe it a custom more iniquitous than the personal labor tax. Whatever else may be accomplished, one thing is certain, it is the to allow the relate of one-half plished, one thing is certain, it is the best institution yet devised to make the farmer pay double tax, to say nothing of the inconvenience and trouble that people are put to in passing and repass-

I have always looked upon the incon venience of toll-gates as the worst featvenence of toll-gates as the worst feature, yet the cost is no small matter. In all countries where the best roads and systems prevail such a thing as toll-gates have no existence. They are a menace to the public travel, expensive and unbusiness-like. The toll-gate was instituted for the purpose of raising money when more was needed than could in justice be raised in any other form of tax. Something like the revenue the government placed on tobacco to meet the exigencies of war, yet while the government has grown very rich since the war the revenue on tobacco still remains (somewhat modified). So I presume if we are to so judge, our county treasury must be in constant need of extra funds, as the toll-gates are still with us. And only a little over a year ago some of our local authorities made a strenuous effort to heap the inliquity upon the farmers of this county by putting tell gates upon all find roads. Had it not been for the wisdom of our legislature we would have had a toll gate on every road in the county. If they had been as wise as the possition they occapied demarded, instend of besceching the legislature to make it lawful to put tell houses on all roads in Ohio county, they would have demanded the repeal of the law that makes it possible for them to exist at all. I say this because it is not good business, and because it is not produced. ure, yet the cost is no small matter. In bla inconvenience to the public.

AN BLUSTHATION. I had occasion one day to stop at a toll house on the road that has the most travel of any in the county and the weather was cold, so that everybody was compelled to be wrapped up in heavy coats, and gloves on their hands. Every few minutes along would come a team, a wagon load of hay, a load of corn, and empty wagons returning from the city, horses and duggies, with ladies driving, and all stopped to leave a good share of their day's profit with the tolk keeper. With chilled bodies and cold hands they stopped, took off their gloves and proceeded to search for the pocketbook. The fingers would be so still from cold that they could hardly feel a quarter of a dollar, but of course must make change to a penny. All those who hastened to and fro to escape the cold were put to the same task.

But this trouble did not end here, a little farther on was another, and while sitting there I became more thoroughly convinced than I had before that the thing was an outrace on patient people. And the wonder is that the people in this progressive age do not rise in wrath to put the thing out of existence, as they are determined to do with mud roads.

This subject of road might be carried on indefinitely, in its different bearings, as there are many important points not touched, but we want the subject distoll house on the road that has the most travel of any in the county and the

on intentitiey, in its different bearings, as there are many important points not touched, but we want the subject discussed by everybody present who is interested. My aim has been to say something that night excite your interest into a lively discussion as to ways and means that we may avoid existing errors in our present system of

2100 Beward Stoo.

small heaps along the road side, after the road has become settled, and utilize them for filling up rate. Buts! what a significant meaning that word has. Let us get out of the ruts it possible.

MINIODER TRIES WANTED.

Our roads are almost two continuous ruts. But you may ask how are we to get out of them. I will simply say by forsaking our grandfathers' ways. It is strange how we can adapt ourselves to circumstances, or perhaps I had better say habituate ourselves to circumstances, or perhaps I had better say habituate ourselves to did customs. It costs us more to keep out of the ruts than nearly all road repairs put together. Well, how can we avoid ruts, there is only one way, and that is by doing away with narrow tires. This part of the subject is most likely to touch an unpopular chord, for, as I said, it is an old custom. But we must progress and we cannot do so by standing still. The romody must ho as radical as the disease is deep seated, If we want

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